(c) and (d) Creation of employment in rural areas is one of the policy objectives of the Government. As per the Approach Paper to the Eleventh Plan, doubling the rate of growth of agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at 4% per annum will improve rural employment conditions by raising rural wages and reducing unemployment. For the agriculture sector, a series of policy initiatives and programmes/schemes have been taken in vital areas like credit, irrigation facilities, crop diversification, marketing infrastructure, horticulture and extension services to boost investment in agriculture and allied sectors. Efforts are on to enhance production and productivity and to encourage farming as a remunerative profession. This process is being further strengthened through farm mechanization, agri clinics and agri business centres. Programmes have also been taken up to develop rainfed areas. All these schemes and programmes are expected to generate additional employment opportunities in Agriculture Sector. Several development programmes such as Macro Management of Agriculture covering Integrated Cereals Development Programme (ICDP) for Rice, Wheat and Coarse Cereals, Gramin Bhandaran Yojana, Development of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Micro Irrigation, Rural Credit, Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) and National Horticulture Mission (NHM) are being implemented. Recently, Government has launched two schemes *viz*. (i) National Food Security Mission (NFSM) to increase production of Rice, Wheat and Pulses and (ii) Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) to incentivize the States/UTs to invest more in the agriculture sector, district wise.

Bio-farming

†3065. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has carried out any survey with regard to use of bio-farming;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether Government has taken any step to encourage bio-farming and provide easy financial support/loan to farmers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) While the Government has not carried out any specific survey with regard to use of bio-farming or organic farming, the details of area certified or under certification are maintained. Till 2007-08, area of 4.01 lakh hectares had been certified under organic cultivation, while area of 4.64 lakh hectares was under certification.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) Government has taken following steps to encourage organic farming:—

(i) Under "National Project on Organic Farming" (NPOF) financial assistance is provided for capacity building through service providers, setting up of organic input production units, promotion of organic farming through training programmes, field demonstrations, setting up model organic farms and market development.

(ii) Under the "National Horticulture Mission" (NHM) and the "Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand" (TMNE), promotion of organic farming has been included as a component and financial assistance is provided for organic cultivation of horticultural crops, setting up of vermi-compost units and organic farming certification.

(e) Does not arise.

Horticulture and floriculture schemes in Goa

3066. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether schemes related to horticulture and floriculture are in operation in Goa;

(b) if so, the names of the schemes;

(c) the financial allocation given to the State since the inception of the schemes;

(d) the activities carried out under the schemes; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The following schemes are in operation in Goa for the development of horticulture and floriculture:—

(i) National Horticulture Mission (NHM) scheme.

(ii) Micro Irrigation Scheme (MIS); and

(iii) Coconut Development Board (CDB) scheme.

(c) The financial assistance given to the State of Goa under different schemes is as below:—

(i) NHM — Rs. 618.84 lakhs (since 2005-06)

(ii) MIS — Rs 15.73 lakhs (since 2006-07)

(iii) CDB — Rs. 157.32 lakhs (since inception)

(d) and (e) The details of various activities carried out under these schemes are given in the Statement.